

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	livonen	Examiner:	UNKNOWN
Serial No.:	TO BE ASSIGNED	Group Art Unit:	TO BE ASSIGNED
Filed:	June 26, 2001	Docket No.:	796.402US01
Title:	SYNCHRONIZED SERVICE PROVISION IN A COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK		

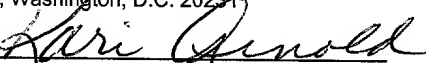
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The undersigned hereby certifies that this Transmittal Letter and the paper or fee, as described herein, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service 'Express Mail Post Office To Addressee' service under 37 CFR 1.10 and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231

By:


Kari Arnold

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Box Patent Application
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Please enter the following preliminary amendment into the above-referenced application.

ABSTRACT

Please insert the attached abstract into the application as the last page thereof.

CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-18 as follows. A clean copy of the entire set of claims is included below. A marked up copy of the amended claims is included in Appendix A.

1. (AMENDED) A method for providing synchronized service in a communications network including user terminals and servers providing services to the user terminals through at least one channel,

comprising the steps of

- forming at least one group of user terminals and allocating at least one channel to an individual group,
- transmitting a recording to the terminals of a group thus formed, each recording including timing markers, each of which indicates an internal position within the recording,
- storing at least part of the recording prior to its playback at each terminal,
- sending a start command to each terminal of the group,
- in response to the start command, starting the playback of the recording at each terminal,
- maintaining status information for the recording, the status information indicating at least the playback position of the recording,
- transmitting a status message to the terminals, the message indicating new status information concerning the recording, and
- changing the playback status at each terminal according to said new status information.

2. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the further step of storing the recordings in a server.

3. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the step of *forming* includes forming several user groups.

4. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the step of storing includes the storing of the whole recording prior to its playback.
5. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the status information further indicates at least the direction and the speed of the playback.
6. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, including initiating the start command at the server.
7. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, including initiating the start command at a user terminal.
8. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, including sending the status message from the server.
9. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 8, including sending the status message in response to a status command from a user terminal.
10. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the further steps of
 - assigning different priorities to the terminals of a group,
 - sending new status information from more than one terminal, and
 - generating the status message on the basis of the status information sent from the terminal with the highest priority of said more than one terminals.
11. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, including the further steps of
 - assigning each terminal predetermined control operations by means of which the terminal is entitled to control the playback,
 - sending new status information from a terminal,
 - checking the control operations assigned to said terminal, and
 - generating the status message in response to said checking.

12. (AMENDED) A system for providing synchronized playback of recordings in a communications network with transmission channels, the system comprising

- a server for managing recordings stored within the system,
- user terminals for storing and playing the recordings, and
- transmission means for transmitting the recordings to the terminals through

at least one channel,

wherein each recording includes timing markers, each of which indicates an internal position within the recording, and that the system further includes

- first management means for maintaining information on user groups formed in the system, the information indicating the user terminal(s) belonging to each group, the channel(s) assigned to each group, and the recording(s) being used by the group,

- second management means for maintaining status information for said recordings, the status information indicating at least the playback position of the recording,

- first control means for sending status information to the user terminals of a group, and

- second control means at each user terminal, responsive to the first control means, for controlling the playback in the terminal according to said status information.

13. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein the system further includes a centralized database for storing the recordings.

14. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein the status information further indicates the direction and the speed of the playback.

15. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein the first management means reside in the server.
16. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein the first control means reside in the server.
17. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein the second management means reside at least in the server.
18. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, wherein user terminals are terminals of a mobile network.

REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is made to insert an abstract page into the application and to amend claims 1-18.

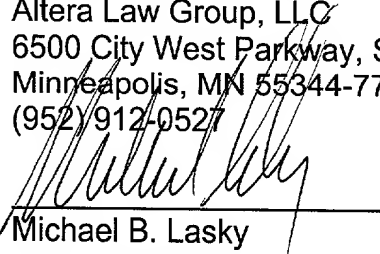
Applicant respectfully requests that this preliminary amendment be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicant's attorney of record, Michael B. Lasky at 952-912-0527.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: June 26, 2001

By:



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Appendix A Marked Up Version of the Amended Claims

1. (AMENDED) A method for providing synchronized service in a communications network including user terminals and servers providing services to the user terminals through at least one channel,

[c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] comprising the steps of

- forming at least one group of user terminals and allocating at least one channel to an individual group,
- transmitting a recording to the terminals of a group thus formed, each recording including timing markers, each of which indicates an internal position within the recording,
- storing at least part of the recording prior to its playback at each terminal,
- sending a start command to each terminal of the group,
- in response to the start command, starting the playback of the recording at each terminal,
- maintaining status information for the recording, the status information indicating at least the playback position of the recording,
- transmitting a status message to the terminals, the message indicating new status information concerning the recording, and
- changing the playback status at each terminal according to said new status information.

2. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including the further step of storing the recordings in a server.

3. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] including the step of forming includes forming several user groups.
4. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] including the step of storing includes the storing of the whole recording prior to its playback.
5. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] including the status information further indicates at least the direction and the speed of the playback.
6. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including initiating the start command at the server.
7. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including initiating the start command at a user terminal.
8. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 2, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including sending the status message from the server.
9. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 8, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including sending the status message in response to a status command from a user terminal.
10. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by] including the further steps of
- assigning different priorities to the terminals of a group,
 - sending new status information from more than one terminal, and
 - generating the status message on the basis of the status information sent from the terminal with the highest priority of said more than one terminals.

11. (AMENDED) A method according to claim 1, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d by]
including the further steps of

- assigning each terminal predetermined control operations by means of
which the terminal is entitled to control the playback,

- sending new status information from a terminal,
- checking the control operations assigned to said terminal, and
- generating the status message in response to said checking.

12. (AMENDED) A system for providing synchronized playback of recordings in a
communications network with transmission channels, the system comprising

- a server for managing recordings stored within the system,
- user terminals for storing and playing the recordings, and
- transmission means for transmitting the recordings to the terminals through

at least one channel,

[c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein each recording includes timing
markers, each of which indicates an internal position within the recording, and that the
system further includes

- first management means for maintaining information on user groups formed
in the system, the information indicating the user terminal(s) belonging to each group,
the channel(s) assigned to each group, and the recording(s) being used by the group,

- second management means for maintaining status information for said
recordings, the status information indicating at least the playback position of the
recording,

- first control means for sending status information to the user terminals of a group, and

- second control means at each user terminal, responsive to the first control means, for controlling the playback in the terminal according to said status information.

13. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein the system further includes a centralized database for storing the recordings.

14. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein the status information further indicates the direction and the speed of the playback.

15. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein the first management means reside in the server.

16. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein the first control means reside in the server.

17. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein the second management means reside at least in the server.

18. (AMENDED) A system according to claim 12, [c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that] wherein user terminals are terminals of a mobile network.

ABSTRACT

For

SYNCHRONIZED SERVICE PROVISION IN A COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

The invention relates to the synchronized playback of video and/or audio recordings in terminals of a communications network. A server stores recordings including timing markers, each of which indicates an internal position within the recording. The system comprises groups of user terminals, at least one channel being assigned to each group. A recording is transmitted to the terminals belonging to the same group and stored there. In response to a start command, the playback of the recording is started at each terminal. Status information indicating at least the playback position of the recording is maintained, and the playback is controlled by transmitting new status information to the terminals of the group. The playback status is changed at each terminal according to said new status information.